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TRICHINA SPIRALIS.

Office Mississippi State Board of Health, }
Jackson, January 7th, 1878. }

DR. A. G. SMYTHE, Sanitary Commissioner First Congressional District, has informed this office, that he has discovered the *Trichina spiralis* in the flesh of hogs recently slaughtered in Lee County.

As these parasites, when introduced into the human system, produce a most alarming form of disease, it is well to know how to detect them in trichinous pork, and the means of destroying their vitality.

They exist in the muscles, and when they become finally attached, a capsule is formed around them, giving to the muscle a gray speckled appearance, as if "thickly sprinkled with the eggs of some small insect," being quite distinct from the red muscle. The capsules contain the thread-like worm wound up spirally. Before the *Trichinae* become en-capsuled they are invisible to the naked eye and in the en-capsuled state, before cretification has commenced, they are difficult of detection without the aid of a lens. The microscope should always be employed.

It is probable that the usual methods of curing or pickling pork, by salting, smoking, etc., only kills these parasites nearest the surface. Raw ham and slightly smoked sausages have been known to produce poisoning.

Imperfect cooking by roasting, broiling or frying only kills the *Trichinae* on the surface; in the parts distant from the surface they remain alive. It requires *thorough* cooking to destroy their vitality. The meat should be subjected to the temperature of boiling water for a sufficient time to insure that every particle has been acted upon by that degree of heat.

WIRT JOHNSTON, M. D.

Secretary State Board of Health.

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Revised letter on
Miechvic spirals
Jan. 7, 1878

W. H. JOHNSON, M.D.